

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 1 and 12-13 have been amended to recite that the reflective polarizing plate comprises a circularly-polarized light separation plate. Correspondingly, claims 19 and 24 have been amended to recite that the reflective polarizing plate comprises a linearly-polarized light separation plate. Support for these amendments is found in the original application, in particular on page 1, lines 32-34 and page 2, lines 8-13.

Also, new claim 26 dependent on claim 7 and reciting that the polarizing element includes at least one other adhesive layer and that the at least one other adhesive layer is not a light diffusion pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, and new claim 27 dependent on claim 1 and reciting that the light-diffusion pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is provided directly on the circularly-polarized light separation plate, have been added.

Further, new claims 28-29 corresponding to claims 7 and 26 but dependent on claim 15, and new claim 30 corresponding to claim 27 but dependent on claim 13, have also been added.

Support for new claims claims 26-27 and 29-30 is immediately derived from the original application, in particular from the Examples and the summary of Table 1 on page 10 of the specification.

Claims 1-30 are pending in the present application. Independent claim 1 and claims 2-11 and 19-23 dependent directly or indirectly on claim 1 are directed to a polarizing element. Independent claim 12 is directed to a liquid crystal display. Independent claim 13 and claims 14-18 and 24-25 dependent directly or indirectly on claim 13 are directed to a method of manufacturing a polarizing element.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 8, 11-14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as

anticipated by US 5,825,542 to Cobb, Jr. et al. (Cobb), and further, claims 1-8, 11-16 and 19-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over US 5,999,243 to Kameyama et al. (Kameyama) in view of Cobb, claims 9 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kameyama and Cobb, further in view of US 5,880,800 to Mikura et al. (Mikura), and claims 10 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kameyama and Cobb, further in view of US 6,288,172 to Goetz et al. (Goetz).

It is alleged in the Office Action that Cobb discloses the combination of a reflective polarizer layer and a diffusing adhesive layer to improve coloring, and Kameyama discloses a cholesteric reflective polarizer with retarder layer in a display, so that it would have been obvious to use the diffusing adhesive layer of Cobb in the display of Kameyama.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. The reflective polarizer used in Cobb is clearly a multilayer linear polarizer, and Cobb is completely silent regarding a reflective polarizer comprising a circularly-polarized light separation plate.

Specifically, the teaching of Cobb is explicitly limited to a linear reflective polarizer, because Cobb states: "The diffusely reflective mirrors and polarizers described herein rely on the unique and advantageous properties of multilayer optical films." (Cobb at col. 4, lines 18-20). It is noted that the multilayer optical film of Cobb is a linear reflective polarizer.

Further, Kameyama also fails to teach or suggest using a reflective polarizer comprising a circularly-polarized light separation plate to compensate color changes. In particular, Kameyama suggests compensating color change by using one or several retardation layers (see Kameyama at col. 9, lines 51 to col. 10, line 15). This passage of Kameyama clearly teaches away from using a diffusing layer in order to compensate color changes in the reflective polarizer of Kameyama.

In contrast, the presently claimed invention uses (i) a reflective polarizer comprising a circularly-polarized light separation plate, and (ii) a light-diffusion pressure-sensitive adhesive layer provided to the reflective polarizing plate, as recited in present claim 1. An advantage of this feature is that a circular-polarized light separation plate has an effect of reversing reflected polarized light, i.e., the rotational direction of the reflected circularly-polarized light is reversed. As a result, the efficiency in reusing the circularly-polarized light can be improved, in particular in the case the backlight does not include a function of canceling polarized light. This advantage is not available with a linearly-polarized light separation plate, which does not reverse the polarization of the reflected linearly-polarized light, so that the only way for reusing the reflected light is to cancel the polarization of the reflected light by using a member prepared separately and laminated in the vicinity of the backlight to positively cancel polarized light.

In addition, with respect to present claim 7 and new claims 27-30, it is submitted that Kameyama teaches that a circularly-polarized light separation plate is combined with a quarterwave plate to obtain a linearly-polarized separation plate. As a result, even if, arguendo, one attempted to use a circularly-polarized light separation plate in Cobb, one would provide the diffusive adhesive layer of Cobb on the quarterwave and/or retardation plate as taught in Kameyama, not between the circularly-polarized light separation plate and the quarterwave plate or directly on the circularly-polarized light separation plate as recited in these claims. Therefore, for this reason alone, claims 7 and 27-30 are not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

Also, with respect to claims 26 and 30, it is submitted that the experimental results reported in Table 1 of the present specification show that having the interposed layer as the only diffusing

layer improves coloring effects. Therefore, for this reason alone, present claims 26 and 30 are not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In summary, the features of the presently claimed invention and its advantages are not taught or suggested in Cobb and Kameyama, and the other cited references fail to remedy these deficiencies of Cobb and Kameyama. Therefore, the present claims are not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Serial Number: 10/072,455

Group Art Unit: 2871

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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